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Office of the Secretary

Office of the Secretary

Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Ms. Dortch:

In compliance with Section 1.1206 of the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) rules, RFD-TV submits this letter to report on meetings Patrick Gottsch, President of RFD-TV and Christopher A. McLean, Washington Counsel to RFD-TV had with Commissioner Abernathy, Mathew Brill of the Commissioner's staff, Catherine Bohigian of Commissioner Martin's staff, Alexis Johns of Commissioner Copp's Staff, Susan Eid of Chairman Powell's staff and Barbara Esbin of the Media Bureau.

RFD-TV is America's only 24-hour television network dedicated to rural interests. It is a non-profit network carried on the Dish Network and DirecTV. Patrick Gohsch informed meeting participants of the importance and success of the FCC's public interest set aside program and recent interest among cable providers in carrying the network.

RFD-TV has filed in the above proceeding in support of the proposed merger between EchoStar Communications and Hughes Electronics Corporation. In the meetings, the FCC was asked to keep an open mind with regards to a restructured merger proposal, which could be submitted by the merger parties within the next 30 days. Rural Americans strongly desire their local channels **and** satellite delivered broadband. The May RFD-TV viewer survey was discussed. One question concerned the proposed merger. Out of a sample of 10,000 responses, only 15% expressed opposition to the merger.


It was also noted that even *if*, as an FCC source recently suggested, but which RFD doubts to be likely, 85% of Americans were to have access to local channels via satellite without the merger, about 40 states would have viewers in the 15% that would be left behind. Some states like Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming would likely have no local channels. That 15% could represent a substantial percentage of the geography of the United States. The status quo represents a “no-opoly” of local service and broadband service to thousands of rural Americans.

The FCC was urged not to miss the unique opportunity to bring local channels to all 210 television markets and true two-way satellite delivered broadband.

Respectfully Submitted,

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markets and true two-way satellite delivered broadband.

Respectfully Submitted,

 Charles R. W. Lee

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